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CHICAGO BEAR REPORT

Game Preview Inside



BEARS at BILLS

Vol. 25 No. 25

November 11, 2000

**Miller Leads
Bears to
Stirring
Upset Win**

**Jauron
Refuses to
Second Guess
QB Choice**

**Allen
Wants to
Return
In 2001**

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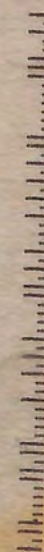
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Extra Points

Owners approve \$100 million loan for Bears

The Bears' elaborate but far from finalized plan to rebuild Soldier Field received a major boost last week when NFL owners meeting in Atlanta agreed to loan the team \$100 million for the project.

Under a new league policy designed to keep franchises from moving to other cities, loans of up to 50 percent are available to teams that need new facilities. To qualify for the loan, the project reportedly must be a public-private partnership and the stadium deal between the Bears and the city of Chicago must be finalized before March 31, 2003.

The loan is expected to be matched by a \$100 million contribution from the Bears generated through the sale of personal seat licenses for no more than 50 percent of the 66,944 seats at the rebuilt Soldier Field.

The NFL loan was approved by 29 of the 32 league owners with dissenting votes from Cincinnati, Oakland and Buffalo. The measure needed 24 votes to pass.



By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Running in place

The Bears will never be confused with a run-oriented team, but that doesn't mean starting tailback **James Allen** wants to bolt town when he becomes a restricted free agent at the conclusion of the season.

Allen entered Sunday's game against the Indianapolis Colts with a team-high 479 yards on 121 carries (4.0 avg.). He is on pace to become the seventh different back in eight years to lead the Bears in rushing. The first five were out of the NFL within two years of accomplishing the feat: **Neal Anderson** (1993), **Lewis Tillman** (1994), **Rashaan Salaam** (1995), **Raymont Harris** (1996-97) and **Edgar Bennett** (1998). The lone exception is **Curtis Enis** (1999).

"I would love to come back here because I've worked hard to get to where I am now," said Allen. "I feel we have a solid group of guys and if we can keep it together and build off that, we're going to be pretty good. I would like to stay here. I've just got to go out and prove to the Bears ... that I'm worthy to be here. It's as simple as that."

Nice guys finish last

The Bears have turned into a perennial loser, destined to finish last in their division for the fourth straight season. No other NFC Central team has ever done that, not even the expansion Tampa Bay Buccaneers. But for veteran **Todd Perry**, this season still isn't as bad as the final years of the **Dave Wannstedt** era.

"We don't have the bad attitudes in the locker room that we had in '97 and '98," said Perry, who joined the Bears as a fourth round pick in 1993. "We're not dealing with internal things. We had some finger-pointing in '97 and '98 and it really distracted a lot from what we were trying to get done. This team here is a good group of guys."

Still trying to make his mark

The Bears signed quarterback **Mark Hartsell** to the practice squad in the wake of **Cade McNown's** injury. Hartsell was waived in the final roster cutdown Aug. 27 after completing 21 of 40 passes for 181 yards and 1 TD in preseason action. Before signing with the Bears in March, he had been out of football since participating in training camp with the Washington Redskins in 1997.

"You sit home and watch the games and think, 'Man, I should be there, I want to be out there, I want to be playing,'" Hartsell said. "But it's the NFL and it's tough to make it, so I'm glad I'm here."

Destination unknown

One quarterback who isn't turning cartwheels about being here is **Shane Matthews**. Since the seven-year veteran injured his hamstring after leading the Bears to a 3-2 start last season, Chicago has lost 15 of 19 games. Matthews is now the No. 2 quarterback behind **Jim Miller**, but with the Bears seemingly committed to developing McNown, Matthews still figures to be elsewhere next season.

"I feel like I probably want to move on," Matthews said. "I like it here and everything, but there's no future for me here. I'm too far along in my career to be sitting around as the third guy. I don't want to waste my talent and hopefully I can go somewhere else and show the talent that I have."

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Smith to face ex-teammates



Thomas Smith

When the Bears travel to Buffalo to battle the Bills this Sunday at Ralph Wilson Stadium, one Chicago player will feel very at home on the road. Former Bills cornerback **Thomas Smith** returns to face his ex-teammates for the first time since signing a five-year, \$22.5 million free agent contract with Chicago in February. Smith, Buffalo's first-round draft pick in 1993, played the first seven seasons of his NFL career with the Bills.

"It really is going to be an emotional game," said Smith, 29, who appeared in 110 games with 95 starts for Buffalo. "I've just got to control those emotions and steer them in the right direction. Just playing in Buffalo—it's been my home and they gave me my first opportunity in the NFL—there's a lot of love there, with the coaching staff, with (general manager) John Butler, and with players that were there when I was there."

Smith, who defends the opponent's best receiver with Chicago like he did most of the time in Buffalo, will be matched up against **Eric Moulds** on Sunday. The 5-11, 190-pound defensive back can hardly wait to renew acquaintances with some close friends.

"I'm sure there's going to be some extra incentive," Smith said. "I played with those guys for seven years. I'm sure they're going to have a little fun with me and I'm going to have a little fun with them. We used to go at it in practice all the time, me and the receivers and the quarterbacks. I'm sure there's going to be a nice reception for me."

In Buffalo, Smith developed a reputation as an aggressive corner who excels in coverage and provides a physical presence against the run but has poor hands. His first season in Chicago has been a carbon copy of that scouting report. Smith and fellow starting cornerback **Walt Harris** certainly aren't the Bears' biggest problem, but neither intercepted a pass in Chicago's first eight games.

"In some cases he's not made the plays," Bears coach **Dick Jauron** said of Smith. "He's had excellent coverage. He's got himself in great position and just had things happen to him, either the ball goes through his hands or he misjudged a couple of balls."

"He plays an aggressive corner. I really like that about him. He's a guy that's willing to tackle. I really like that about him. (But) things haven't gone as well as any of us would have liked for Thomas in terms of the pass interference calls and play-making at the point where the ball arrives because he's had really good coverage on a lot of people."

— Larry Mayer

Payton still inspiring Bears

Last Wednesday on the one-year anniversary of **Walter Payton's** death, Bears players said they are still inspired by the memory of arguably the best and most popular player in team history.

Payton died Nov. 1, 1999 of bile duct cancer at the age of 45 after a nearly yearlong fight with liver disease.

"It was a moving time in my life," recalled linebacker **Barry Minter**. "So often we get lost in this game we play. When the situation happened with Walter, it made me look back into my life and put a lot of things into perspective and how I live my life."

Because of the position he plays, starting running back **James Allen** feels a special bond with the NFL Hall of Famer.

"Every Sunday at Soldier Field I think about Sweetness and say a prayer," Allen said.

This spring the Bears honored the NFL's all-time leading rusher by naming their indoor facility the **Walter Payton Center**.

"He is sort of a guiding light to this organization in terms of how we would like our players to perform," said Bears head coach **Dick Jauron**. "The organization is certainly devoted to him. It's a great thing for our players to see his name up on the wall because he is an example of how these young men—and all of us—should want to live their lives and the effort they should put into what they do and what we choose for a profession."

— Larry Mayer



Walter Payton compiled 16,726 yards in 13 seasons with the Bears, missing only one game in 1975.

THEY SAID IT



“Yeah, he could (win the starting job), absolutely. If we started to roll and started to win, we wouldn't make a lot of changes. You wouldn't change that, especially after what we've been through.”

Dick Jauron on QB Jim Miller



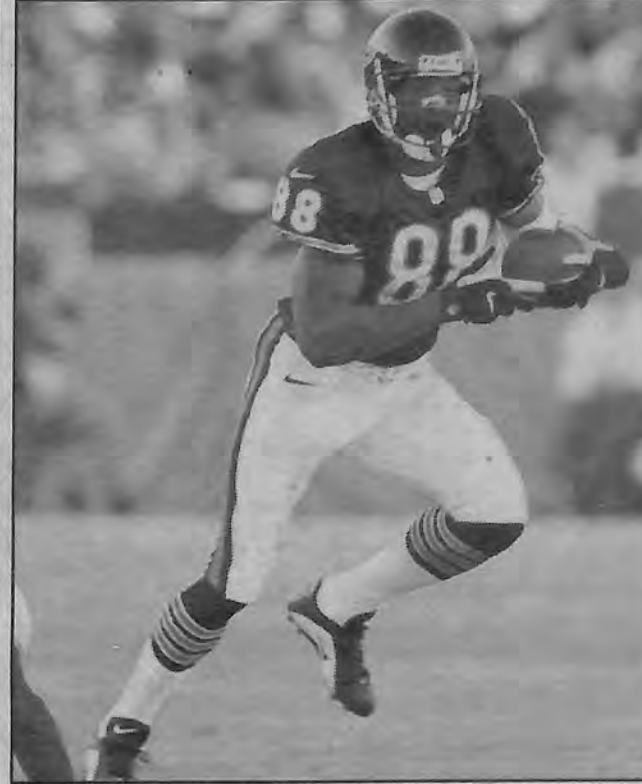
p.5

OPEN AUDITION: James Allen's future with the Bears could hinge on his late-season performance.



p.12

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE: In his first start, Jim Miller leads the Bears to an upset win over Indianapolis.



p.18

KEY ELEMENT: The Bears only seem to win when receiver Marcus Robinson makes a big play.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

COVER STORY

4 Opportunity knocks: Jim Miller's tenure as the Bears' starting quarterback could last longer than expected.

Cover photo by Steve Woltmann

FEATURES

6-8 Dynamic duo: Sunday's opponent, the Buffalo Bills, are playing two quarterbacks. But unlike the Bears, both are winning games.

9 Memory lane: Long before Michael Jordan earned the nickname "Air," another Chicago sports legend combined remarkable leaping ability and a flair for the dramatic.

16-17 In poor company: Members of the 1969 Bears, the worst team in franchise history, think they could beat the 2000 squad.

COLUMNISTS

10 Mike Mulligan: With Cade McNown sidelined with a shoulder injury, the Bears have more choices than they could imagine.

15 Doug Buffone: One game doesn't make a season or a quarterback, but the Bears' win over the Colts was a great start.

18 Bob LeGere: The Bears need Marcus Robinson at his best in the second half of the season to prevent a disappointing year from turning into a total disaster.

NEWS

12-15 Shining star: Jim Miller's performance in Sunday's 27-24 upset win over the Indianapolis Colts left no doubt who should be the Bears' starting quarterback.



Photo by Steve Woltmann

Let the good times roll

Brian Urlacher (54) and Warrick Holdman (53) celebrate after the Bears escaped with a 27-24 win over the Indianapolis Colts Sunday in Chicago.

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Miller could win job

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Jim Miller's tenure as the Bears' starting quarterback could last longer than expected. Head coach Dick Jauron, who stuck with the erratic Cade McNown throughout the first half of the season because he felt the second-year quarterback gave the Bears the best chance to win, said recently that Miller could permanently win the job if he produces victories.

Miller made his first start since last Thanksgiving on Sunday against the Indianapolis Colts at Soldier Field. He replaced McNown, who is out 4-6 weeks with a separated left throwing shoulder suffered in a 13-9 loss at Philadelphia Oct. 22. The Bears entered the Colts game with a 1-7 record, matching the worst eight-game start in franchise history.

"Yeah, he could (win the starting job), absolutely," Jauron said. "If we started to roll and started to win, we wouldn't make a lot of changes. You wouldn't change that, especially after what we've been through."

Miller, a seven-year veteran from Michigan State, took over an offense that had scored just two touchdowns on its last 40 possessions and ranked 31st in third down efficiency, 29th in points and 29th in first downs.

"If anybody goes out and plays well, it's tough to take them off the field," Miller said. "But you never know what can happen in this business. I've got to go out, perform and do my job. The thing right now offensively is that we need to concentrate on putting the ball in the end zone. We haven't done that enough this year and that's what we're going to focus on."

Last season Miller replaced an injured McNown and produced two of the top seven most prolific passing days in Bears history. He passed for 422 yards against the Minnesota Vikings and 357 the following week versus the San Diego Chargers. In doing so, he became



Photo by Steve Woltmann

Winning games could allow Jim Miller to supplant Cade McNown as the Bears' starting quarterback.

the first Bears quarterback to top 300 yards in consecutive games since Bill Wade in 1962.

While Miller is a much more polished player than McNown, even the most optimistic fan would admit that expecting a repeat performance is unrealistic.

"I'm not superman or anything," Miller said. "I've just got to focus and let the offense be the star of the show, and make good decisions. We've got a lot of talented guys on this team."

Last year is last year and this year is this year. It's totally different."

Miller was suspended by the NFL for the final four games of last season for taking an illegal supplement, but he still led the Bears with an 83.5 passer rating. After McNown was injured against the Eagles, Miller looked rusty in completing 14 of 34 passes for 128 yards and one interception. He entered the game without having taken a regular season snap or even a first-team practice rep since training camp.

Because of the quarterback change, the bye week came at the ideal time for the Bears. The club practiced Monday through Thursday and were off Friday, Saturday and Sunday before resuming their regular work schedule in preparation for the Colts game.

As for McNown, his MRI exam was negative for rotator cuff damage, but the Bears still revised the timetable for his return from 2-4 weeks to 4-6 weeks. Last season McNown proved to be a quick healer, returning to practice just three days after suffering a sprained right knee in Green Bay that was supposed to keep him out 2-5 weeks. The 1999 first-round draft pick hopes to make a similar recovery.

"I'm not going to be unsafe or anything," McNown said, "but as soon as I feel better, that's when I'll be out there again."

No one probably wants to forget the first half of the season more than McNown, who was plagued by inaccuracy on the field and bad judgment off it. He issued apologies after suggesting his wide receivers may have been too tired to track down overthrown passes and said fans should stay away from Soldier Field "and save their boos for the TV."

McNown ranks 11th in the NFC with a 72.8 passer rating. He has completed 140 of 240 passes for 1,513 yards with 7 TDs and 8 interceptions. He led NFL quarterbacks with 320 yards rushing but was sacked 25 times in eight games.

I'm not superman or anything ... Last year is last year and this year is this year. It's totally different."
Jim Miller



McNown not worried about his job security

Even though head coach Dick Jauron recently said that Jim Miller could win the starting quarterback position, Cade McNown is more concerned about recovering from his injury than the possibility of losing his job.

"Coach Jauron has not mentioned anything like that to me," said McNown, who's out 4-6 weeks with a separated left throwing shoulder. "It's not even an issue right now. The most important thing is having an opportunity and right now I don't because of my injury. I just have to work to get back and be ready to play."

McNown vowed to continue growing as a player despite being sidelined.

"I'm going to continue to develop, even this week and next week," he said. "I'm going to continue to stay in the film room and look at myself. I'll get a chance to sit back without having to game plan and having to do all the things we do every week, and just get a chance to look at some of the things up close."

McNown missed one game last season with a sprained right knee but figures to be out for at least three contests with his shoulder injury.

"It's a frustrating thing to go through," he said. "I don't like it one bit, but that's part of the game. It's just how you bounce back from that that's going to show who you are and what you're about."

With Miller replacing McNown, several Bears players noticed the tempo of practice immediately picked up during the bye week. Part of that also had to do with the fact that the Bears were working only on their own plays and weren't preparing for an opponent.

"The way things have been going, I think guys have a mindset to go out there and lay it on the line and guys are doing what they need to do in practice so we can be efficient," said fullback Curtis Enis, who returned to the lineup after missing three games with a sprained left shoulder.

"Practice is quick, we're being efficient, the defense is doing well. It seems like things are coming together."

Miller, who replaced McNown in an Oct. 22 game at Philadelphia without having taken a first-team practice rep since training camp, benefited greatly from the bye week.

"I think it helped Jim in regards to knocking the rust off," said left guard Todd Perry. "He's gotten progressively better every day. Jim looks as good as he ever did last year."

— Larry Mayer

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Future of Bears beginning now

MARK POTASH



A season that began with playoff hopes appears all but over after a disappointing 1-7 first half, leaving the Bears to find something to play for in the second half of the season, and their fans searching for a reason to watch.

"We can't do anything about the first half. It's over with. It's done," defensive end Phillip Daniels said. "But we can do a lot about the second half."

Like what? The Bears emerged from the bye last week with virtually no hope of winning eight straight games for a shot at the playoffs—not with a schedule that includes Indianapolis and Tampa Bay at Soldier Field and Buffalo and the New York Jets on the road right off the bat.

Still, there will be plenty for Bears fans to watch for in the second half, most of it with the 2001 season involved—the draft, free agency and settling some unsettled positions in anticipation of training camp next year.

With that in mind, here's a look at a few of the key issues that should be addressed in the second half of the season:

- Jim Miller or Cade McNown?

Bears coach Dick Jauron has painted himself into a corner with the quarterback situation. If Jim Miller plays poorly in place of Cade McNown, what does that say for the Bears' talent and Gary Crowton's offensive system? But even if Miller is good, a quarterback controversy automatically ensues: Jauron is on record as saying McNown is the future, yet Miller will



Photo by Steve Woltmann

James Allen's future with the Bears likely will hinge on his performance over the final eight games.

start as long as he wins.

"I just think you wait and see how everything works out," Bears vice president of player personnel Mark Hatley said. "You take it a game at a time and see where we are when Cade gets back—where he is, where Jim is and where Shane is. And like Dick said, whoever's the best quarterback needs to play."

- Just how badly do the Bears need a running back?

Everybody assumes a running back will be the Bears' top offseason priority, but Hatley is not ready to say so publicly, though he personally has scouted many of the top college run-

ning backs already this season.

"We have to wait and see how the season goes," Hatley said. "If James [Allen] or whoever it is gives us a good last half of the season and we feel good about it, then that takes some of the pressure off. And if he's not what we want, we'll go look and see what's available."

San Francisco's Charlie Garner (98 yards per game, 5.3 per carry, three TDs), Cincinnati's Corey Dillon (86 yards per game, 5.2 per carry, three TDs), Pittsburgh's Jerome Bettis (90 yards per game, 3.8 per carry, six TDs) and the New York Giants' Tiki Barber (74 yards per game, 6.1 per carry, four TDs) are the top backs who could be unrestricted free agents after this season.

There does not yet appear to be a Edgerrin James or Ricky Williams in the college ranks.

"Deuce McAllister [of Mississippi] is awfully talented. But he splits time—that's the only thing I don't like about him," Hatley said. "But

he's about 225 pounds right now [and 6-1] and a 4.4 or 4.5 guy [in the 40], and he catches it. He's probably the most talented one I've seen so far."

- Do the Bears still need help on the defensive line?

If running back isn't the priority, the defensive line almost certainly will be. Daniels' impact on the rest of the defensive line has been imperceptible to this point. Can the Bears live with Bryan Robinson—an unrestricted free agent after this season—at the other end? Has Jim Flanigan reached a point of diminishing

"If James [Allen] or whoever it is gives us a good last half of the season and we feel good about it, then that takes some of the pressure off."

Mark Hatley

returns?

"The defensive line will be interesting to see what happens these next eight games ... how far we come along," Hatley said.

- Will players like Jerry Azumah, Rex Tucker, Dustin Lyman and Dez White make some of Hatley's decisions for him?

The Bears will have some key decisions on some of their own free agents after this season—cornerback Walt Harris, guard Todd Perry, wide receiver Eddie Kennison, tight end John Allred and Robinson at the top of the list.

Azumah is considered a future starting cornerback, but if he does not progress sufficiently, the Bears might have to overspend to keep Harris. White's development as a speed receiver to complement Marcus Robinson could make Kennison a lesser priority. Likewise, Tucker with Perry and Lyman/Kaseem Sinceno with Allred.

The Bears also will have to make decisions on whether they want to offer one-year or long-term contracts to their restricted free agents—center Olin Kreutz, running backs Allen and Curtis Enis and long-snapper Pat Mannely.

The Bears at least should be good salary-cap shape for the offseason—probably among the top five teams in the league, according to director of business operations Jim Miller.

The Bears have about \$54 million in roster contracts against the salary cap for 2001, which is expected to about \$66 million. Contract offers to restricted free agents and salary increases could push the Bears' figure over \$60 million, Miller said.

"I think we'll have the money available to improve the team," Miller said. "But by no means are we going to be able to be as aggressive as last year [when the Bears spent \$50 million on three players in free agency]. I don't anticipate us being big-money heavy in the free agent market."

Mark Potash covers the Bears for the Chicago Sun-Times.



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GAME PREVIEW



CHICAGO BEARS

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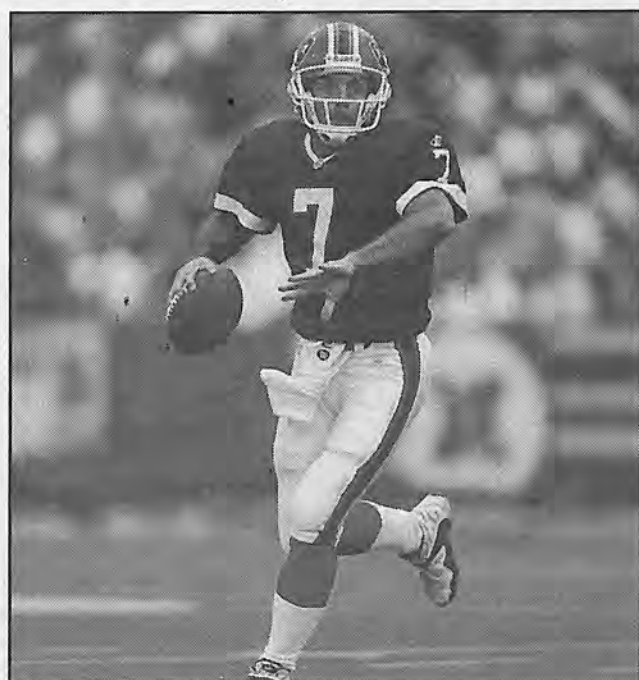
Kickoff: Noon (ct), Sunday, Nov. 12.
Site: Ralph Wilson Stadium.
Capacity: 75,339
Playing surface: Artificial turf
Last meeting: Bears won 20-3 Dec. 7, 1997 at Soldier Field. Chicago won its second straight home game after dropping its first six in a 4-12 season. Erik Kramer passed for 270 yards including TDs of 30 yards to Ryan Wetnight and 3 yards to Ricky Proehl. Raymont Harris surpassed the 1,000-yard mark, then broke his leg. The Bears' defense held Buffalo to 160 total yards.
Series: Bears lead 5-2 and have won two straight but are 1-2 in Buffalo.



BUFFALO BILLS

at

Flutie, Johnson a dynamic QB duo



Bills super sub Doug Flutie, a former Bear, was a six-time MVP in the Canadian Football League.

By Gene Chamberlain
 Bear Report Correspondent

A young starting quarterback with a separated throwing shoulder, a veteran quarterback who's been an effective replacement — it all sounds too familiar. But it's not the Bears, it's the Buffalo Bills, this week's opponent.

However, the Bills have handled their entire quarterback situation with much less controversy than the Bears.

Doug Flutie and the Bills continue to insist as soon as starter Rob Johnson regains strength in his right shoulder, he'll be the starter. They're taking this approach even though Flutie beat the New York Jets and very nearly defeated Minnesota on the road.

The big difference from the Bears' situation is that the opening day starter, Johnson, has been effective. He has a higher passer rating (90.4) than Flutie and eight touchdowns to only three interceptions. So when Johnson is ready, he will

start. Both are mobile passers, the kind that give the Bears' defense fits.

What the Bears won't have to contend with against Buffalo is an overpowering running game, or a pass defense that had been dominant in the NFL.

Injuries and poor play took Antowain Smith out of the Bills' lineup, and Shawn Bryson has averaged only 3.2 yards a carry. The Bills have turned to using fullback Sammy Morris (3.8 yards a carry) to run the ball because of the overall ineffectiveness of their running game.

Coping with a strong running game has been one of the major problems with the Bears' defense this year. They allowed 156 rushing yards or more to five of their first eight opponents, although they held Green Bay, Detroit and Philadelphia below 100 yards rushing.

Brian Urlacher's presence at middle linebacker has helped improve their effectiveness against the run.

The Bears' secondary has been susceptible to big plays in the passing game,

and Walt Harris and Thomas Smith will be tested by a Bills offense that draws from its passing attack what it hasn't been able to achieve on the ground.

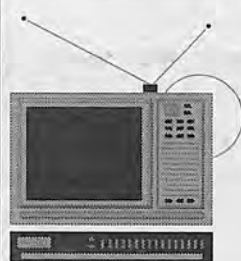
Wideout Eric Moulds is the chief threat with 832 receiving yards by the season's mid-point, but he has a strong pair of complementary receivers in Jeremy McDaniel and Peerless Price.

In years past, the Bills' defense would provide an overwhelming match-up for the Bears' offense. However, the loss of key players like Bruce and Thomas Smith has led to a drop in performance.

While Buffalo remains in the top five overall on defense, their pass defense has given up more big plays than in recent years with new starters Keion Carpenter at free safety and Antoine Winfield at cornerback.

The opportunity exists for long pass plays by the Bears' offense, and from that end quarterback Jim Miller has proven more effective than Cade McNown, who remains sidelined.

ON THE AIR



Television:

FOX will televise the game live to a regional audience.



Radio:

WBBM-AM (780) will carry the game live with Gary Bender, Hub Arkush and Tom Thayer announcing.

Who rates the advantage?

By Gene Chamberlain

		Positions	Comments
☐	☒	Quarterback	Ditka said Flutie was magic, and he still is a decade later.
☒	☐	Running back	Bills use RB by committee; Enis-Allen combo formidable.
☐	☒	Wide receiver	Moulds blue chip and Price-McDaniel good complements.
☐	☒	Tight end	Riemersma over injuries; Bears need Lyman to contribute.
☐	☒	Offensive line	Right side of Bills' line inexperienced; Kreutz's return is big.
☐	☒	Defensive line	Washington, Hansen stepped up with Smith gone.
☐	☒	Linebackers	Cowart, Holecek help hold runners to 2.9 yards a carry.
☒	☐	Secondary	Thomas Smith's defection to Bears big loss for Bills.
☐	☒	Special teams	Buffalo's Christie, Mohr solid kicker-punter combo.



CHICAGO BEARS

No.	Name	Pos	Ht	Wt	Age	Exp	College
2	Paul Edinger	K	5-10	162	22	R	Michigan State
8	Cade McNown	QB	6-1	208	23	2	UCLA
9	Shane Matthews	QB	6-3	196	30	7	Florida
10	Louie Aguiar	P	6-2	220	34	10	Utah State
15	Jim Miller	QB	6-2	215	28	7	Michigan State
20	James Allen	RB	5-10	215	24	3	Oklahoma
21	R.W. McQuarters	CB	5-9	198	23	3	Oklahoma State
22	Shawn Wooden	S	5-11	205	26	5	Notre Dame
23	Jerry Azumah	CB	5-10	195	22	2	New Hampshire
24	Glyn Milburn	RB/KR	5-8	176	28	8	Stanford
25	Thomas Smith	CB	5-11	190	29	8	North Carolina
27	Walt Harris	CB	5-11	195	26	5	Mississippi State
29	Frankie Smith	S	5-9	194	31	8	Baylor
30	Mike Brown	S	5-10	202	22	R	Nebraska
32	Marlon Barnes	RB	5-9	215	24	1	Colorado
37	Tony Parrish	S	5-10	211	24	3	Washington
43	Mike Green	S	6-0	176	23	R	Northwestern State
44	Curtis Enis	RB	6-0	250	24	3	Penn State
45	Scott Dragos	FB/TE	6-2	245	24	1	Boston College
47	Ray McElroy	DB	5-11	196	28	5	Eastern Illinois
53	Warrick Holdman	LB	6-1	246	24	2	Texas A&M
54	Brian Urlacher	LB	6-3	244	22	R	New Mexico
55	Sean Harris	LB	6-3	252	27	6	Arizona
57	Olin Kreutz	C	6-2	285	23	3	Washington
58	Chris Villarrial	G	6-4	308	27	5	Indiana (PA)
59	Rosevelt Colvin	LB	6-3	254	23	2	Purdue
60	Casey Wiegmann	C	6-3	285	25	5	Iowa
62	Robert Newkirk	DT	6-3	290	23	1	Michigan State
64	Rex Tucker	OL	6-5	315	23	2	Texas A&M
65	Patrick Mannelly	T/LS	6-5	270	25	3	Duke
71	James Williams	T	6-7	331	31	10	Cheyney State (PA)
74	Jimmy Herndon	T	6-8	318	27	5	Houston
75	Todd Perry	G	6-5	308	29	8	Kentucky
76	Brad Culpepper	DT	6-1	270	31	9	Florida
78	Blake Brockermeyer	T	6-4	300	26	6	Texas
79	Jerry Wisne	T	6-6	315	24	2	Notre Dame
80	Dez White	WR	6-0	219	21	R	Georgia Tech
82	Eddie Kennison	WR	6-0	198	27	5	LSU
83	Macey Brooks	WR	6-5	212	24	2	James Madison
85	Kaseem Sinceno	TE	6-4	255	24	3	Syracuse
86	Marty Booker	WR	5-11	215	24	2	Northwest Louisiana
87	D'Wayne Bates	WR	6-2	215	24	2	Northwestern
88	Marcus Robinson	WR	6-3	215	24	4	South Carolina
89	Dustin Lyman	TE	6-4	250	24	R	Wake Forest
90	Van Tuinei	DE	6-4	290	28	4	Arizona
91	Khari Samuel	LB	6-3	240	23	2	Massachusetts
92	Barry Minter	LB	6-2	250	29	8	Tulsa
93	Phillip Daniels	DE	6-5	290	27	5	Georgia
95	Troy Wilson	DE	6-4	257	29	5	Pittsburgh State
96	Clyde Simmons	DE	6-5	292	36	15	Western Carolina
97	Mike Wells	DT	6-3	315	29	8	Iowa
98	Bryan Robinson	DE	6-4	300	26	4	Fresno State
99	Jim Flanigan	DT	6-2	290	29	7	Notre Dame
Practice squad							
11	Mark Hartsell	QB	6-4	225	26	1	Boston College
26	Todd McMillon	CB	5-10	183	27	1	Northern Arizona
38	Brian Edwards	RB	6-1	220	24	2	E. Tennessee State
52	Dustin Cohen	LB	6-3	236	23	R	Miami (Ohio)
67	Gannon Shepherd	OT	6-8	301	28	R	Duke
Injured Reserve							
12	Brent Bartholomew	P	6-2	220	23	2	Ohio State
14	Sulecio Sanford	WR	5-10	190	23	1	Middle Tenn. State
17	Chad Mackey	WR	6-2	205	25	1	Louisiana Tech
31	Cedric Donaldson	CB	5-9	176	24	1	Louisiana State
39	Reggie Austin	CB	5-9	173	23	R	Wake Forest
63	Brad Williams	G	6-4	295	22	R	Notre Dame
81	Bobby Engram	WR	5-10	185	27	5	Penn State
84	John Allred	TE	6-4	246	26	4	USC

Age as of opening weekend 2000



BUFFALO BILLS

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
2	Steve Christie	K	6-0	195	32	11	William & Mary
7	Doug Flutie	QB	5-10	180	38	7	Boston College
9	Chris Mohr	P	6-5	215	34	11	Alabama
10	Alex Van Pelt	QB	6-1	220	30	6	Pittsburgh
11	Rob Johnson	QB	6-4	212	27	6	USC
20	Henry Jones	S	6-0	200	32	10	Illinois
21	Chris Watson	KR/DB	6-1	192	23	2	Eastern Illinois
22	Daryl Porter	CB	5-9	187	26	4	Boston College
23	Antowain Smith	RB	6-2	228	28	4	Houston
25	Donovan Greer	DB	5-10	178	26	4	Texas A&M
26	Antoine Winfield	CB	5-9	180	23	2	Ohio State
27	Ken Irvin	CB	5-11	186	28	6	Memphis
28	Travares Tillman	S	6-1	190	23	R	Georgia Tech
29	Keion Carpenter	S	5-11	205	23	2	Virginia Tech
35	Jonathan Linton	FB	6-1	234	26	3	North Carolina
38	Shawn Bryson	RB	6-1	233	24	1	Tennessee
39	Raion Hill	S	6-0	200	24	1	LSU
45	Sammy Morris	RB	6-0	228	23	R	Texas Tech
51	DaShon Polk	LB	6-2	235	23	R	Arizona
52	John Holecek	LB	6-2	242	28	6	Illinois
53	Keith Newman	LB	6-2	245	23	2	North Carolina
54	Corey Moore	LB	5-11	225	23	R	Virginia Tech
55	Jay Foreman	LB	6-1	240	23	2	Nebraska
56	Sam Cowart	LB	6-2	245	25	3	Florida State
59	Sam Rogers	LB	6-3	245	30	7	Colorado
60	Jerry Ostroski	C	6-3	327	30	7	Tulsa
63	Bill Conaty	OL	6-2	300	27	4	Virginia Tech
65	Jon Carman	T	6-7	335	24	R	Georgia Tech
66	Victor Allotey	G	6-3	320	25	1	Indiana
69	Marcus Spriggs	OT	6-3	315	26	4	Houston
70	John Fina	OT	6-5	300	31	9	Arizona
72	Joe Panos	G	6-3	300	29	7	Wisconsin
74	Jamie Nails	OT	6-6	360	25	4	Florida A&M
75	Marcellus Wiley	DE	6-4	275	25	4	Columbia
76	Ethan Albright	OL	6-5	278	29	7	North Carolina
77	Robert Hicks	OT	6-7	330	25	3	Mississippi St.
79	Ruben Brown	G	6-3	304	28	7	Pittsburgh
80	Eric Moulds	WR	6-2	204	27	5	Mississippi St.
81	Peerless Price	WR	6-0	190	24	2	Tennessee
82	Kwame Cavil	WR	6-2	203	21	R	Texas
84	Bobby Collins	TE	6-4	248	24	2	North Alabama
85	Jay Riemersma	TE	6-5	254	27	4	Michigan
86	Jeremy McDaniel	WR	6-0	197	24	1	Arizona
88	Sheldon Jackson	TE	6-3	250	24	2	Nebraska
89	Avion Black	WR	5-11	181	23	R	Tennessee St.
90	Phil Hansen	DE	6-5	273	32	10	N. Dakota St.
91	Shawn Price	DE	6-4	290	30	8	Pacific
92	Ted Washington	NT	6-5	330	32	10	Louisville
93	Pat Williams	DT	6-3	310	28	3	Texas A&M
96	Erik Flowers	DE	6-4	270	22	R	Arizona St.
97	Leif Larsen	DT	6-4	295	25	R	Texas-El Paso
98	Kenyatta Wright	LB	6-0	238	22	R	Oklahoma St.
99	Fred Jones	LB	6-2	246	23	R	Colorado

What to Watch

How will the Bears attack a 3-4 defense? It's become virtually an extinct defense the last few years, but the Bills have always been a major proponent of it under longtime defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell. It's not an easy defense to run without a dominant pass rusher, and with Bruce Smith gone, Buffalo had dropped to 20th in sacks with 14.

Coordinator Gary Crowton's offense hasn't had to attack a base 3-4 defense in a game until now. Whether the Bears' slip screens can work against a defensive alignment that has more players off the line of scrimmage will create an interesting match-up.



MEET THE COACHES

Dick Jauron



Dick Jauron, 50, had the worst coaching record in Bears history after 24 games at 7-17. Jauron, who was born in Peoria, spent nine seasons with Green Bay as defensive backs coach, then four years as Jacksonville's defensive coordinator. Jauron played eight NFL years (1973-80) as a safety for the Lions and Bengals. He started coaching as an assistant with Buffalo in 1985.



Wade Phillips



Wade Phillips, 53, has compiled a 27-13 record in three seasons as Bills head coach. He guided Buffalo to a 10-6 mark in 1998 after inheriting a 6-10 team that had lost six of its last seven games. Phillips, the son of former NFL coach Bum Phillips, is just the 14th NFL coach to record at least 10 wins in his first two seasons. Phillips was previously Denver's head coach in 1993-94.

All-time Meetings

Year	Winner (Site)
1997	Bears 20-3 (S)
1994	Bears 20-13 (S)
1991	Bills 35-20 (BF)
1988	Bears 24-3 (S)
1979	Bears 7-0 (BF)
1974	Bills 16-6 (BF)
1970	Bears 31-13 (W)

Stadium codes:
W-Wrigley Field;
BF-Rich Stadium, Buffalo;
S-Soldier Field.

KEY MATCHUPS



THOMAS SMITH

VS.

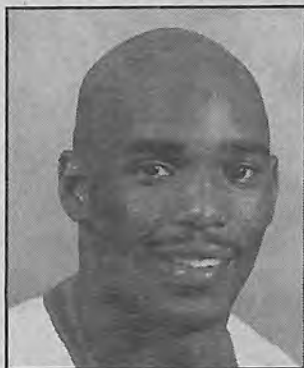
ERIC MOULDS

Last year Moulds year fell off his 1998 breakout year pace when he set a team record with 1,368 receiving yards. However, the 6-2, 204-pounder out of Mississippi State is having a potential record-setting season this year with 59 catches.

Smith went against Moulds in training camp and practice prior to this season while a member of the Buffalo Bills. The 5-11, 190-pound cornerback spent seven seasons with Buffalo after being drafted in the first round in 1993. Smith had no interceptions in his first eight games with the Bears.



Thomas Smith



Eric Moulds

OLIN KREUTZ

VS.

TED WASHINGTON

Washington, at 6-5 and a reported 330 pounds, is the prototype nose tackle in the 3-4 defense who plugs up the run with his size. However, Washington serves a bigger role than aircraft carrier. The Bills' two-time Pro Bowl player and 10-year veteran is so athletic for his size that he was third on the team in tackles at the season's mid-point.

Kreutz will be badly outsized in this matchup, at 6-2, 285, and will not enjoy the same quickness advantage he usually has on opponents because of Washington's athleticism.



Olin Kreutz



Ted Washington

MARCUS ROBINSON

VS.

ANTOINE WINFIELD

A 5-9, 180-pound cornerback from Ohio State, Winfield will be on the left side of the Bills' defense and the Bears will surely try to match their more experienced 6-3 wideout on him. Winfield is the player tabbed to replace Thomas Smith when he came to the Bears as a free agent. He had one of the Bills' nine interceptions at the mid-point and has struggled at times.

Robinson is off his 1999 pace when he gained a team-record 1,400 receiving yards. He had only one 100-yard receiving game in the season's first half after having five last season.



Marcus Robinson



Antoine Winfield

WHEN THE BEARS HAVE THE BALL

RCB 27 IRVIN 25 Greet	FS 29 CARPENTER 28 Tillman	SS 20 JONES 39 Hill	LCB 26 WINFIELD 22 Porter 21 Watson
WLB 53 NEWMAN 99 Jones	MLB 52 HOLECEK 51 Polk 98 Wright	SLB 56 COWART 55 Foreman	
RE 75 WILEY 96 Flowers	RT 59 ROGERS 54 Moore	LT 92 WASHINGTON 93 Williams	LE 90 HANSEN 91 Price 97 Larsen
WR 82 KENNISON 86 Booker 83 Brooks	LT 78 BROCKERMAYER 74 Herndon	LG 75 PERRY 64 Tucker	C 57 KREUTZ 60 Wiegmann
		RG 58 VILLARRIAL 64 Tucker	RT 71 WILLIAMS 79 Wisne
			TE 85 SINCENO 89 Lyman 45 Dragos
		QB 15 MILLER 9 Matthews 8 McNown (Inj.)	WR 88 ROBINSON 80 White 87 Bates
	RB 44 ENIS 32 Barnes	RB 20 ALLEN 24 Milburn	

WHEN THE BILLS HAVE THE BALL

RCB 25 SMITH 23 Azumah	FS 30 BROWN 22 Wooden 47 McElroy	SS 37 PARRISH 29 Smith 43 Green	LCB 27 HARRIS 21 McQuarters
WLB 53 HOLDMAN 92 Minter	MLB 54 URLACHER 91 Samuel	SLB 55 HARRIS 53 Colvin	
RE 93 DANIELS 96 Simmons	RT 97 WELLS 90 Tuinei 62 Newkirk	LT 99 FLANIGAN 76 Culpepper	LE 98 ROBINSON 95 Wilson
WR 80 MOULDS 86 McDaniel 82 Cavil	LT 70 FINA 65 Carman	LG 79 BROWN 66 Allotey	C 60 OSTROSKI 63 Conaty
		RG 74 NAILS 72 Panos	RT 69 SPRIGGS 77 Hicks
			TE 85 RIEMERSMA 84 Collins 88 Jackson
		QB 7 FLUTIE 10 Van Pelt	WR 81 PRICE 89 B lack
	RB 35 LINTON 38 Bryson 23 Smith	FB 45 MORRIS 88 Jackson	



TALE OF THE TAPE

Chicago Bears at Buffalo Bills

(Rankings through Week 9)



OFFENSIVE RANKINGS

TOTAL OFFENSE	21	7
Rushing offense	18	20
Passing offense	21	6
Total yards per play	20	14
Rushing average	6	24
Passing average	27	11
Percentage had intercepted	17	3
Sacks allowed per pass play	22	24
First downs per game	29	12 (t)
Third down efficiency	31	17
Fourth down efficiency	18 (t)	6
Punt return average	21	31
Kickoff return average	14	30
Gross punt average	30	18
Net punt average	27	23 (t)
Points per game	29	15
Field goal percentage	26 (t)	11 (t)

DEFENSIVE RANKINGS

TOTAL DEFENSE	27	6
Rushing defense	28	3
Passing defense	19	16
Total yards per play	22	10
Rushing average	20	2
Passing average	24	22
Percentage intercepted by	26	13
Sacks per pass play	19	21
First downs per game	18	3
Third down efficiency	15	11
Fourth down efficiency	24 (t)	28 (t)
Punt return average	10	19
Kickoff return average	10	8
Gross punt average	4	12
Net punt average	8	27
Points per game	26	19
Opponents' FG percentage	3 (t)	25 (t)

TURN BACK THE CLOCK



As part of every game preview this season in Bear Report, we will take a look back at a memorable game played between the Bears and their upcoming opponent.

Payton's leap lifted Bears to win at Buffalo

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Long before Michael Jordan earned the nickname "Air," another Chicago sports legend combined remarkable leaping ability and a flair for the dramatic.

In a 7-0 win at Buffalo on Oct. 7, 1979, Walter Payton scored the game's only touchdown by soaring over Bills defenders with one of his patented flying leaps on fourth-and-goal from the 1-yard line. Sweetness actually took off from the 2 and landed squarely on his helmet a yard deep in the end zone, toes pointing skyward.

"That guy can leap so high he could stuff himself in the basket," said Buffalo nose tackle Fred Smerlas. "He's like a fly."

Payton had provided a preview of the TD on second down at the 3 by diving to the 1.

"On his first jump, I was halfway up and he still leaped over my head," Smerlas said. "On the touchdown, he went over everyone."

The play, called 45-lead, was designed for Payton to run through a hole created by tackle Ted Albrecht and guard Noah Jackson. But Buffalo filled the gap at the goal line.

"I was hoping for a hole," Payton said. "But

BEARS 7, Buffalo 0

Oct. 7, 1979

Rich Stadium

I was a high jumper in college. I went 6-5 1/4 and I'm not even 6 feet."

Payton rushed for 155 yards on 39 carries and caught two of Bob Avellini's four pass completions on the day. Payton's TD, which came with 11:18 to play in the fourth quarter, was set up by Jim Osborne's fumble recovery at the Buffalo 13.

After the score, the Bills managed just three first downs on three possessions despite a 20-mile-an-hour wind at their backs and the NFL's No. 1-rated quarterback in Joe Ferguson. Buffalo entered the game as the league's highest-scoring team.

"The thing I like is that we didn't give the game away at the end," said Bears safety Doug Plank.

Bob Thomas missed field goal attempts of 23 and 44 yards and Robin Earl lost two fumbles in Bills' territory. "I was the only one keeping them in the game," Earl said.

Avellini attempted only eight passes on the blustery and rainy day, matching the number of punts by Bob Parsons.

"I still know we have to complete passes," said Bears head coach Neill Armstrong. "I would have liked to throw 20-25 times. That was the plan. But it was tough throwing that stinking ball out there. As a steady diet, it's tough to win and not complete passes."

"You have to mix it up a little," Avellini said. "We had said we wanted to run more plays. Then the passes will come. It was really a tough day to pass the football."

"I love it," Albrecht said. "I wish we'd run 90 times. But you can't win every week like that unless you're awesome."

Armstrong had considered kicking a field goal on fourth down before opting to hand the ball off to Payton one more time.

"I thought we had them pinned down there, and if we had been unsuccessful we had them on the 1," said Armstrong, who called timeout to decide what play to run.

The high-scoring Bills had a hard time believing they had been shutout by the Bears.

"The weather was a factor, but only a small factor," Ferguson said. "When I saw what kind of day it was going to be, I knew we were in for a dogfight."

"Still, after seeing films of the Bears, if anyone had told me we weren't going to score, I would have thought they were nuts."

The victory snapped a three-game losing streak and upped the Bears' record to 3-3. They would lose their next two games before closing the season by winning seven of eight to earn a wildcard berth. Their season ended with a 27-17 playoff loss at Philadelphia.



Walter Payton often went head over heels to score for the Bears.

With Cade McNown sidelined with a shoulder injury, the Bears have more choices at quarterback than they ever could imagine. The first choice is easy: Jim Miller becomes the starter for at least three games and perhaps longer.

Next comes the promotion of Shane Matthews from third string to backup. Maybe this season won't be a "redshirt" year for Matthews after all as the player has joked.

Where the decision 2000 really gets interesting is picking a third string quarterback. The Bears recently signed Mark Hartsell to their practice squad, but have opted not to add him to the 53-man roster. That means they will be going to war without a designated third quarterback and will rely instead on Marty Booker, who last played the position four years ago at Northeast Louisiana.

It's a calculated gamble. The Bears don't have to cut a player to fit Hartsell on the roster and they know no team has used three quarterbacks in one game yet this year. In fact, the closest may have been the Bears who went to Jim Miller when McNown went down at Philadelphia and nearly had to go to Matthews when Miller had to duck into the locker room for a bathroom break in the third quarter.

Booker was nearly pressed into action last year when Matthews was out and McNown got injured early in a victory at Green Bay. Booker found himself a heartbeat away from the presidency, which in football terms means next up to play quarterback.

"I was there on the sidelines and every time I saw Jim Miller get down I would duck my

Booker now among those in arms race

MIKE MULLIGAN



head out and I'd be looking and looking," Booker said. "When he got up I was like: 'all right, all right.'"

Booker re-enacted the scene recently in the Bears locker room, wrapping his large hands around Dwayne Bates shoulders and leaning around his fellow wide receiver so his head appears to be popping out of Bates side. For comic effect Booker gave a look of wide-eyed concern that makes you think of a supporting actor in a Charlie Chan movie from the 1930s.

"Let's just say he was obviously very concerned," said Miller, who recalled seeing Booker's face from the field after being sacked by a blindside hit off a blitz.

Bates laughs at that assessment.

"He was over there wide-eyed," the receiver said as Booker standing next to him nodded in agreement. "Jim went down and I was like: 'Book take some snaps.' He just stood there and I kept saying go take some snaps."

The moment passed. Miller got up and finished the game and Booker was never called into service.

"I would have just dropped back and let it go," he said. "I'd air it out and let somebody go get it."

Bates laughs.

"You know what you would have done?" he says. "You would have run like hell."

Booker laughs.

"That's right," he said.

The Bears figure Booker knows enough about playing quarterback to get them through a game if an emergency arises. But he's not alone in that capacity.

"He's one of a lot of guys that can throw the ball pretty good," Bears offensive coordinator Gary Crowton said. "Most of the receivers have pretty good arms."

In fact, the Bears are loaded with players who have taken a turn at quarterback at some point or other. Macey Brooks and Bobby Engram, both excellent baseball players too, are included in that group, as are guys like Eddie Kennison, R.W. McQuarters and even defensive end Phillip Daniels.

"Quarterback is where you put your best athletes, it's a control thing where you want that guy touching the ball," McQuarters said. "I think everybody has done it. A lot of these guys have kicked and punted too."

Daniels, now 6-5, 290 pounds, was a Daunte Culpepper type quarterback at Donalsonville (Ga.) High, passing for 984 yards and rushing for 984 his senior year.

"I was a middle linebacker and the backup quarterback and the guy ahead of me was real short," Daniels said. "So one game the coach let me finish up in the fourth quarter and I threw two quick TD passes. That was it. The job was

mine."

Daniels describes himself as the Curtis Enis of quarterbacks, a guy who sought contact first.

"I tried to run people over," he said. "I was real physical."

Ironically, Miller said he began his career as an offensive lineman and was moved to quarterback because he could throw the ball the farthest.

Crowton said that's often the way it is with quarterbacks. As a college coach who didn't get very many defensive recruits, he would often bring in a group of quarterbacks and move them to different positions.

"We attracted a lot of quarterbacks, but not a lot of corners or tight ends, for example," Crowton said. "We'd bring them in at quarterback and sometimes move them to defensive back or tight end. It really helped us a lot that there are so many really good athletes playing quarterback at the high school level."

That's what happened to Bates, who was recruited as a quarterback at Northwestern and played that position his first year before moving to receiver.

"Most of these guys were option quarterbacks," Bates said. "I was a pure passer."

Booker, who still ran a few trick plays in college after changing positions, said he was encouraged to move to receiver by an NFL scout who timed him in a 4.4 40-yard dash. He threw for 1,418 yards and 16 touchdowns as a high school senior. Booker and Bates both say the process of playing quarterback helped once they moved to receiver.

"If you can play quarterback, you can play any position," Bates said. "It's the hardest position on the field. If you go from quarter-

back to receiver you know where you want to throw the ball and where you want to get it."

Daniels is content to leave the quarterbacking to the receivers in case of emergency. But he does harbor the fantasy of one day playing the position for one play.

"My dream is to get to the Super Bowl and we're winning and I get to kneel down and kill the clock to win the game," Daniels said. "I don't have to run it. I don't have to throw it. Just let me kneel down and kill that clock to win the Super Bowl. That's my dream."

Mike Mulligan covers the Bears and the NFL for the Chicago Sun-Times.



Marty Booker

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--Mike North



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A FIGHT TO THE FINISH



BEARS

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GAME STORY

Miller stars as Bears escape with victory

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Jim Miller's performance in Sunday's 27-24 upset win over the Indianapolis Colts left no doubt who should be the Bears' starting quarterback. The only question that remained unanswered is exactly where the team would be if he had manned the position during the first half of the season.

Making his first start in place of an injured Cade McNown, Miller completed 24 of 35 passes for 214 yards with 1 TD as the Bears (2-7) started the second half of the season with a bang after a series of whimpers. The win snapped a five-game home losing streak and satisfied the partisan Soldier Field crowd that had been chanting for Miller practically since the team left Platteville.

"It felt good," Miller said. "I felt very comfortable, felt very relaxed. I just go out and try to execute. In this offense, you don't try to be the star. If you just let the offense be the star and get the ball in the right guys' hands and let them do the work, you can be very successful."

Miller marched the Bears to two touchdowns and two field goals on their four first half drives as Chicago stunned the favored Colts (6-3) and star quarterback Peyton Manning by jumping to a 20-0 halftime lead. Miller orchestrated time-consuming TD drives of 80 and 92 yards as the Bears offense turned Manning into a reluctant spectator.

In the first half, the Bears dominated in time of possession (21:05-8:55), total yards (273-69)

	
24	27

and first downs (15-2).

"The first half was an unbelievable half," said Bears coach Dick Jauron. "To start the game like that and to keep the ball away from them and keep their offense on the sidelines, which we knew we had to do, was huge."

Curtis Enis capped a 17-play, 80-yard game-opening drive that burned 9:39 off the clock with an 11-yard TD run. Paul Edinger made it 10-0 with a 41-yard field goal and Miller followed by tossing a 34-yard TD pass to Marcus Robinson to widen the margin to 17-0. Edinger then connected from 37 yards on the final play of the half.

Miller benefited from a strong running game led by James Allen, who rushed for 85 yards on 16 carries.

"Jim brings a fire to the huddle," Allen said. "We pretty much know his situation. People have been screaming for him, so what we wanted to do—the skill guys—was to come out and make plays for him."

The Bears set the tone on their opening

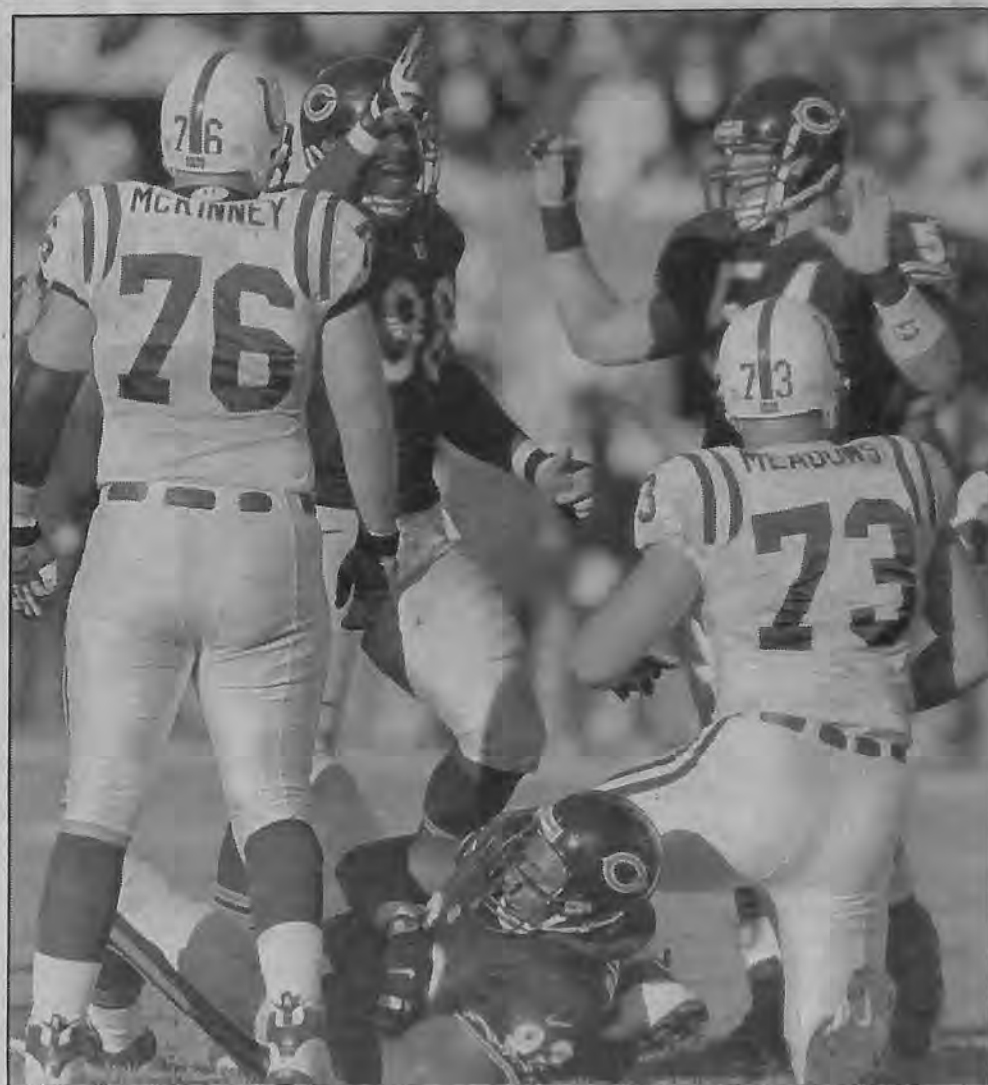


Photo by Steve Wollmann

Phillip Daniels clinched Sunday's win by recovering this Peyton Manning fumble. Daniels also sealed the Bears' first win with a late hit on Brett Favre.

drive when a bungled play turned into a key first down. With Edinger attempting a 44-yard field goal, the snap squirted through the hands of holder Louie Aguiar, who quickly recovered the ball and rolled out to his right. Aguiar lofted a jump-ball pass over the middle into a group of players, and Mike Wells, the Bears' 6-3, 315-pound defensive tackle, plucked it out of the air for a 14-yard reception and a first down. Enis scored two plays later.

"We don't even hardly ever practice that," said Wells, who had never caught a pass on any level. "When we do practice it, they never throw it to me. I just didn't want to get thumped. The ball seemed like it was in the air forever. It wasn't pretty, but I caught it."

Miller's TD pass to Robinson midway through the second quarter was far more picturesque. On third-and-one from the Indianapolis 34-yard line, Miller executed a play-action fake and dropped a perfect pass into Robinson's hands down the left sideline.

Enis, playing for the first time since injuring his left shoulder on the Bears' first series Oct. 1 at Green Bay, wasn't the only maligned player who scored a Chicago touchdown. Cornerback Walt Harris, who entered the game with no interceptions, picked off a Manning pass on the third play of the third quarter and returned it 35 yards for a TD.

The defensive score gave the Bears a seemingly safe 27-0 lead, but Manning was just getting started. The all-pro quarterback engineered four straight scoring drives, marching the Colts to three TDs and a field goal as Indianapolis cut the deficit to 27-24.

Edgerrin James (17 carries for 68 yards)

PLAY OF THE GAME

Anytime Mike Wells catches a pass, it's got to be our play of the game. His 14-yard catch on a botched field goal set up the Bears' first TD.

started the rally with a 1-yard TD run and Mike Vanderjagt kicked a 19-yard field goal. Manning followed with TD passes of 21 yards to James and 19 yards to Jerome Pathon.

Trailing 27-24, the Colts recovered an onside kick at their own 42 with 1:36 remaining. But the Bears' defense responded, sealing the victory when linebacker Roosevelt Colvin sacked Manning, forcing a fumble that was recovered by end Phillip Daniels at the Colts' 30 with 1:05 remaining.

Chicago players jubilantly charged off the field to a rare standing ovation and celebrated an even rarer home victory. The Bears entered the game having lost eight of their last nine at Soldier Field.

"It was pretty joyous," Miller said of the mood in the Bears' locker room after the game. "I don't think the whole city of Chicago will go out to Menards and buy red paint and paint the town red, but it's a good feeling. I know that. It's a great feeling. I'm excited. We needed it. I hope the city of Chicago enjoys it because winning makes everybody happy. It certainly makes us happy."

Bears 2000 Schedule

PRESEASON			
Date	Opponent	Bears	Opponent
Sat., Aug. 5	at N.Y. Giants	20	8
Sat., Aug. 12	CLEVELAND BROWNS	19	6
Sat., Aug. 19	at Cincinnati Bengals	20	24
Fri., Aug. 25	TENNESSEE TITANS	28	34
REGULAR SEASON			
Sun., Sept. 3	at Minnesota Vikings	27	30
Sun., Sept. 10	at Tampa Bay Buccaneers	0	41
Sun., Sept. 17	NEW YORK GIANTS	7	14
Sun., Sept. 24	DETROIT LIONS	14	21
Sun., Oct. 1	at Green Bay Packers	27	24
Sun., Oct. 8	NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	10	31
Sun., Oct. 15	MINNESOTA VIKINGS	16	28
Sun., Oct. 22	at Philadelphia Eagles	9	13
Sun., Oct. 29	Bye		
Sun., Nov. 5	INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	27	24
Sun., Nov. 12	at Buffalo Bills	Noon	FOX
Sun., Nov. 19	TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	Noon	FOX
Sun., Nov. 26	at N.Y. Jets	Noon	FOX
Sun., Dec. 3	GREEN BAY PACKERS	7:20 p.m.	ESPN
Sun., Dec. 10	NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	Noon	CBS
Sun., Dec. 17	at San Francisco 49ers	3:05 p.m.	FOX
Sun., Dec. 24	at Detroit Lions	Noon	FOX

*Central time

No second thoughts

Jauron doesn't second-guess his choice at QB

By Larry Mayer
Managing Editor

Dick Jauron stuck with Cade McNown during the first half of the season because the head coach felt the second-year quarterback gave the Bears the best chance to win. Asked if he had any second thoughts about that stance after Jim Miller engineered Sunday's 27-24 upset win over Indianapolis, Jauron said:

"I'm just really happy for the guys after what we've suffered through to have this victory and I don't think 'second thoughts' is how I would put it," Jauron said. "I'm very pleased for Jim and how he performed because clearly there's a lot of pressure on him to come in and play and I thought he did an outstanding job."

With Miller directing the offense, the Bears converted 8 of 15 third down opportunities (53 percent) after entering the game ranked 31st in that category with a 27 percent success rate. Part of the improvement was due to the fact that Miller operates the offense at a much faster tempo than the inexperienced McNown.

"That's what we want to do," Miller said. "That's what we did last year. We always had a good tempo and we wore the defense out. They were tired that first half, I know that. We want to continue to do that."

NFL RESULTS

WEEK 10

Bye: Jacksonville

Sunday, Nov. 5

Bears 27, Indianapolis 24
Baltimore 27, Cincinnati 7
Buffalo 16, New England 13 (OT)
Philadelphia 16, Dallas 13 (OT)
Miami 23, Detroit 8
N.Y. Giants 24, Cleveland 3
Tennessee 9, Pittsburgh 7
New Orleans 31, San Francisco 15
Tampa Bay 27, Atlanta 14
Arizona 16, Washington 15
Seattle 17, San Diego 15
Denver 30, N.Y. Jets 23
Oakland 49, Kansas City 31
Carolina 27, St. Louis 24
Monday, Nov. 6
Minnesota at Green Bay, 8 p.m.

WEEK 11

Bye: Washington

Sunday, Nov. 12

BEARS at Buffalo, noon
Arizona at Minnesota, noon
Atlanta at Detroit, noon
Baltimore at Tennessee, noon
Seattle at Jacksonville, noon
Cincinnati at Dallas, noon
New England at Cleveland, noon
New Orleans at Carolina, noon
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh, noon
Miami at San Diego, 3:05 p.m.
Kansas City at San Francisco, 3:05 p.m.
Green Bay at Tampa Bay, 3:15 p.m.
St. Louis at N.Y. Giants, 3:15 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Indianapolis, 7:20 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 13
Oakland at Denver, 8 p.m.



GAME NOTES

On an island: On Miller's 34-yard TD pass to Marcus Robinson on third-and-one, the 6-3 receiver beat single coverage from 5-8 cornerback Tyrone Poole down the left sideline.

"I was surprised they just put Tyrone Poole one on one with Marcus," Miller said. "They didn't have a middle safety at all. It was just straight man coverage, one on one. Nobody else was going to give him help. Tyrone's a great player, but Marcus has him by a good 5-6 inches (actually seven)."

Robinson led the Bears with eight receptions for 90 yards.

Deja vu: Sunday's game was almost a repeat of last season's opener against Kansas City. In both contests, the Bears scored a touchdown on their initial drive and generated two TDs and two field goals on four first-half possessions. They didn't score an offensive touchdown in the second half of either game. Against the Chiefs, the Bears led 20-3 at half-time and held on to win 20-17. On Sunday, they led 27-0 and escaped with a 27-24 win.

When the Colts were mounting their comeback Sunday, the hard-luck Bears felt like they had been in that position before. In this year's opener, the Bears blew a 20-9 third-quarter lead and lost 30-27 at Minnesota. In their first win, they led Green Bay 24-3 in the second half before escaping with a 27-24 win.

"There are so many bad things that have happened, it's almost like you get in that mode like here we go again," Miller said. "Good teams can overcome things like that and hopefully this team learns from that situation. When we've got a team down, we've got to learn to put them away."

"We shot ourselves in the foot a couple of times in the second half and those are things we need to improve on. But we found a way to win and that's big for this team."

Hold that pose: Curtis Enis' 11-yard TD run was the longest scoring run of his career. Last year he had rushing TDs of 1, 2 and 3 yards and was criticized after one score when he slid and posed like a centerfold in the end zone. On Sunday's trip into the end zone, he hopped around, looking as if he wasn't quite sure how to celebrate.

"I wasn't going to do anything dumb," Enis said. "I just held onto the ball and went to the sideline. I'll give it to my boys. I looked for the ref to hand him the ball, but he took off."

Told by one reporter that Walter Payton celebrated some TDs by throwing the ball into the stands, Enis said: "It's like (a \$25,000 fine) plus another \$10,000 from the team. I hate giving up that much money for that."

News & notes: Sunday was Miller's first start since last Thanksgiving in Detroit and just the fifth of his seven-year NFL career. He had started just one game before joining the Bears in 1997. He was a career backup with Pittsburgh (1994-96), Atlanta (1997) and Jacksonville (1997). ... The Bears had TD drives of 9:39 and 6:10 after entering the game with just one scoring drive of over 5:30 all season. ... After entering the game having scored two TDs on 40 offensive possessions, the Bears reached the end zone on two of their first three drives. ... Brian Urlacher, named the NFL's Defensive Rookie of the Month after averaging 11 tackles and 1 sack in four games in October, led the Bears with 11 tackles Sunday. Urlacher, who has a team-high 6 sacks, is bidding to become the first rookie to lead the Bears in that category since Jim Osborne had 6 in 1972. ... The Colts entered the game with the NFL's second-ranked offense. ... Paul Edinger has made seven straight field goals after starting the season 4 of 8. He hit from 41 and 37 yards Sunday.



James Allen

INSIDE THE BEARS

Bears make gains with rushing attack

The Bears rediscovered their running game in Sunday's win, rushing for 143 yards on 35 carries. It was their highest output on the ground since their last victory, when they gained 178 yards in Green Bay Oct. 1.

James Allen led the way with 85 yards on 16 carries. He had 74 of those yards at half-time. Curtis Enis, in his first game since the Packers contest, added 25 yards on 9 attempts. And Marlon Barnes saw his first extended action, gaining 23 yards on five carries, all on one third quarter drive.

"We're getting better and better at running the ball," said quarterback Jim Miller. "We started to do it pretty well against Philadelphia (Oct. 22). I thought the guys up front blocked sweet. Those guys are really taking a lot of pride. I wouldn't say the media has called them out, but they take a lot of pride in what they do and they want to do it well. They blocked extremely well."

In six games since being anointed the Bears' feature back, Allen has rushed for an average of 71 yards per game. He must average 63 yards over the final seven games to reach 1,000 for the season.

"That means a lot to me," Allen said. "I want to reach that 1,000-yard mark. I want to go above and beyond that. I always told myself that when I become a starter that my goal is to have a 1,000-yard season. I think it's within reach."

In addition to opening holes for Allen and others, the Bears' offensive line didn't permit a sack. Left tackle Blake Brockermeyer did particularly well against Chad Bratzke.

— Larry Mayer



Photo by Steve Woltmann

Holder Louie Aguiar turned a botched field goal attempt into a key 14-yard completion to Mike Wells.

2000 NFL STANDINGS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	7	2	0	.778	168	115
Philadelphia	6	4	0	.600	204	147
Washington	6	4	0	.600	185	158
Arizona	3	6	0	.333	147	246
Dallas	3	6	0	.333	204	213

Central Division

Minnesota	7	1	0	.875	197	178
Detroit	5	4	0	.556	169	187
Tampa Bay	5	4	0	.556	232	152
Green Bay	3	5	0	.375	168	167
BEARS	2	7	0	.222	137	226

Western Division

St. Louis	7	2	0	.778	354	279
New Orleans	6	3	0	.667	183	142
Carolina	4	5	0	.444	183	153
Atlanta	3	7	0	.300	176	277
San Francisco	2	8	0	.200	253	323

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Miami	7	2	0	.778	200	119
Indianapolis	6	3	0	.667	256	198
N.Y. Jets	6	3	0	.667	208	193
Buffalo	5	4	0	.556	179	186
New England	2	7	0	.222	156	187

Central Division

Tennessee	8	1	0	.889	181	125
Baltimore	6	4	0	.600	167	105
Pittsburgh	5	4	0	.556	137	93
Jacksonville	3	6	0	.333	165	207
Cincinnati	2	7	0	.222	87	194
Cleveland	2	8	0	.200	101	233

Western Division

Oakland	8	1	0	.889	256	172
Denver	5	4	0	.556	268	201
Kansas City	5	4	0	.556	243	215
Seattle	3	7	0	.300	157	239
San Diego	0	9	0	.000	145	236

SCORING SUMMARY

Chicago Bears.....10 10 7 0 27
 Indianapolis Colts.....0 0 8 16 24
 Bears, 1, 5:21, Enis 11-yard run (Edinger kick) (17-80, 9:39) 0-7
 Bears, 1, 0:02, Edinger 41-yard field goal (8-37, 3:19) 0-10
 Bears, 2, 4:12, Robinson 34-yard pass from Miller (Edinger kick) (12-92, 6:10) 0-17
 Bears, 2, 0:00, Edinger 37-yard field goal (9-48, 1:57) 0-20
 Bears, 3, 13:42, Harris 35-yard interception return (Edinger kick) 0-27
 Colts, 3, 6:00, James 1-yard run (Manning-Pollard pass) (11-74, 5:11) 8-27
 Colts, 4, 10:33, Vanderjagt 19-yard field goal (14-71, 4:24) 11-27
 Colts, 4, 6:39, James 21-yard pass from Manning (run failed) (6-60, 1:52) 17-27
 Colts, 4, 1:36, pathon 19-yard pass from Manning (Vanderjagt kick) (8-79, 1:19) 24-27
 Paid attendance: 66,944; time: 3:06

FINAL TEAM STATISTICS

	Colts	Bears
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	20	20
By Rushing	7	5
By Passing	11	14
By Penalty	2	1
THIRD DOWN EFFICIENCY	6-13-46%	8-15-53%
FOURTH DOWN EFFICIENCY	2-2-100%	1-2-50%
TOTAL NET YARDS	371	370
Total Offensive Plays (inc. time thrown passing)	61	71
Average gain per offensive play	6.1	5.2
NET YARDS RUSHING	90	143
Total Rushing Plays	20	35
Average gain per rushing play	4.5	4.1
Tackles for a loss - number and yards	1-4	2-3
NET YARDS PASSING	281	227
Times thrown — yards lost attempting to pass	2-21	0-0
Gross yards passing	302	227
PASS ATTEMPTS-COMPLETIONS-HAD INT.	39-26-1	36-25-0
Average gain per pass play (inc. # thrown passing)	6.9	6.3
KICKOFFS-In End Zone-Touchbacks	5-3-1	5-1-0
PUNTS Number and Average	4-38.5	3-37
Had Blocked	0	0
FGs-PATs Had Blocked	0-0	0-0
Net punting average	34	37
TOTAL RETURN YARDAGE (Not Including Kickoffs)	0	53
No. and Yards Punt Returns	0-0	2-18
No. and Yards Kickoff Returns	5-104	3-61
No. and Yards Interception Returns	0-0	1-35
PENALTIES Number and Yards	7-81	8-58
FUMBLES Number and Lost	1-1	0-0
TOUCHDOWNS	3	3
Rushing	1	1
Passing	2	1
Interceptions	0	1
EXTRA POINTS Made-Attempts	2-3	3-3
FIELD GOALS Made-Attempts	1-1	2-2
SAFETIES	0	0
FINAL SCORE	24	27
TIME OF POSSESSION	24:37	35:23

CHICAGO BEARS

	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
RUSHING					
Allen	16	85	5.3	28	0
Enis	9	25	2.8	11	1
Barnes	5	23	4.6	6	0
Robinson	1	9	9.0	9	0
Miller	4	1	0.3	3	0

	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	TKD/Yd.	TD	LG	Had Int.
PASSING							
Miller	35	24	214	0/0	1	34	0
Aguiar	1	1	13	0/0	0	13	0

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LG	TD
PASS RECEIVING					
Robinson	8	90	11.2	34	1
Allen	5	37	7.4	13	0
Kennison	5	37	7.4	9	0
Sinceno	2	21	10.5	11	0
Brooks	2	16	8.0	9	0
Wells	1	13	13.0	13	0
Booker	1	11	11.0	11	0
White	1	2	2.0	2	0

	No.	Yds.	LG	TD
INTERCEPTIONS				
W. Harris	1	35	35	1

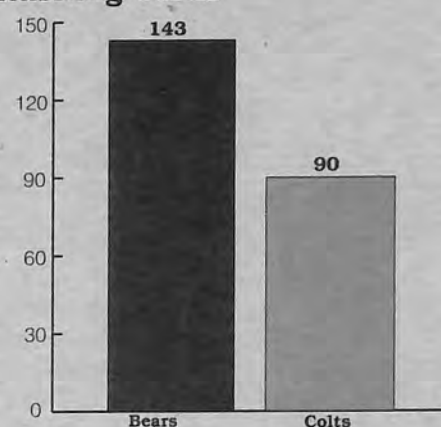
	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TB	In 20	LG
PUNTING						
Aguiar	3	11	37	0	0	49



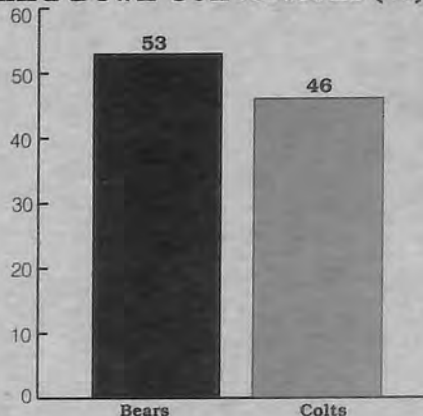
GAME STATISTICS



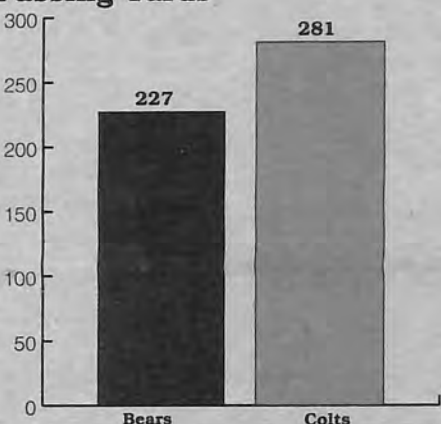
Rushing Yards



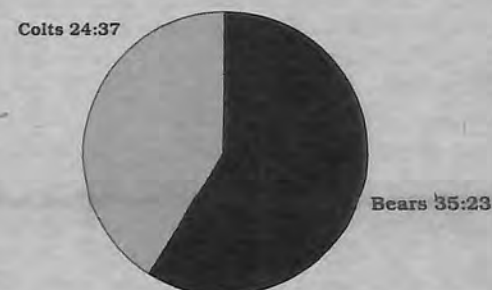
Third Down Conversions (%)



Passing Yards



Time of Possession



	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
PUNT RETURNS					
Milburn	2	2	18	19	0
KICKOFF RETURNS					
Milburn	2	0	50	27	0
Enis	1	0	11	11	0

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
RUSHING					
James	17	68	4.0	11	1
Manning	3	22	7.3	9	0

	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	TKD/Yd.	TD	LG	Had Int.
PASSING							
Manning	39	26	302	2/21	2	24	1

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LG	TD
PASS RECEIVING					
Harrison	6	42	7.0	10	0
Dilger	5	66	13.2	24	0
Green	5	45	9.0	14	0
James	4	49	12.2	21	1
Pathon	3	58	19.3	22	1
Pollard	3	42	14.0	18	0

	No.	Yds.	LG	TD
INTERCEPTIONS				
None				

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TB	In 20	LG
PUNTING						
Smith	4	154	38.5	0	1	42

	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
PUNT RETURNS					
(Downed)	3	0	0	0	0

	No.	FC	Yds.	LG	TD
KICKOFF RETURNS					
Pathon	4	0	87	27	0
Wilkins	1	0	17	17	0

CHICAGO BEARS
Unofficial

	T	Ast.	Sack	Yrds.	Int.	PD	FF	FR
Urlacher	9	2	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
Smith	7	0	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
Holdman	6	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Brown	6	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Colvin	3	0	1.0	8.0	0	0	1	0
McQuarters	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Daniels	2	0	1.0	13.0	0	0	0	1
Robinson	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Smith	2	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
W. Harris	1	1	0.0	0.0	1	1	0	0
Flanigan	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
S. Harris	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Parrish	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Wooden	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
Wells	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS
Unofficial

	T	Ast.	Sack	Yrds.	Int.	PD	FF	FR
Cota	9	2	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Hollier	6	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Peterson	6	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Blevins	5	0	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
Burris	5	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Williams	4	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Belser	4	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Bratzke	4	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Poole	4	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Bennett	3	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Whittington	1	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Chester	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Holsey	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Macklin	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Washington	1	0	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Thomas	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	2	0	0



Perfect game-plan, Miller carries Bears

DOUG BUFFONE



The Bears' offense did the only thing it could to upset the Colts Sunday at Soldier Field: control the football, move the chains and score some points. I give the majority of the credit for the effort to quarterback Jim Miller, who did a terrific job.

Miller opened the game by directing four straight scoring drives. To me, the key was the 92-yard march that resulted in the 34-yard TD pass to Marcus Robinson. Usually when the Bears get that type of field position, they don't get out of the hole let alone score a touchdown.

The offense was more balanced than I ever remember. As a matter of fact, Miller threw 35

passes and the offense ran the ball 35 times. The tempo was there and the rhythm was there, and eight different players caught passes for the Bears.

One of the biggest differences in this game was the Bears' ability to convert on third down. Miller is the one who deserves the credit because he took what the defense gave him and kept the Bears out of third and long situations. The running game was effective, but it was effective because the defense had to respect the passing game. Miller stirred the pot, and the pot hasn't been stirred all season.

The Colts threw three corner blitzes at Miller and he picked them all up and threw the ball to the right receiver. For the first time this season, the offense looked like the offense from last year. It's not degrading Cade McNown to say this because he's inexperienced, but Miller can handle the offense much better.

I really thought James Allen ran the ball well and he was an effective weapon coming out of the backfield catching passes. He had five receptions for 37 yards, second only to Marcus Robinson's 8 catches for 90 yards.

The one downside was the offense's ability to pick up short third downs in the second half. They failed in three such situations, and if they



Photo by Steve Woltmann

James Allen gained 74 of his 85 yards in the first half of Sunday's 27-24 win over the Indianapolis Colts.

could have picked those up, the game would have never been close.

Defensively, the Bears made a couple of big time plays. First, Walt Harris intercepted a Peyton Manning pass and returned it 35 yards for a touchdown. I've said before that if Harris made every interception he put himself in position to catch he'd be all pro. Rookie Mike Brown nailed Marvin Harrison on the Colts' final drive, and Indianapolis was charged with

Trivia Trove



Who quarterbacked the Bears to their last playoff victory?

(Answer on page 19)

its final timeout because Harrison was injured. Then Roosevelt Colvin and Phillip Daniels combined for another big play to clinch the win.

The bottom line is that Manning is an unbelievable player. He was unreal in the second half and threw passes that were constantly on the money.

The Bears' offensive line did a heck of a job. One guy I'd like to single out is Blake Brockermeyer. He was battling Chad Bratzke, and you didn't hear Bratzke's name all day.

This was a great victory for the Bears, but one game doesn't make a season or for that matter a quarterback. It was a great start, though, and I hope the Bears can keep it going Sunday in Buffalo.

Going into a hostile environment, I'm eager to see how Miller and the Bears respond. I hope they can establish a run against the Bills defense, which is tougher than the Colts. Whatever happens, I expect it to be a close game. The four games Miller has started for the Bears have been decided by 3, 3, 4 and 3 points with the first two in overtime.

Doug Buffone hosts the Doug Buffone Sports Magazine Sunday mornings on Fox Sports Chicago.

**"NUTS
AND BOLTS.
WE GOT
SCREWED."**

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Bad to the bone 2000 Bears in poor but select company

By Greg Couch
Special to Bear Report

Imagine the Bears center accidentally snapping the ball not to the quarterback, but instead to the other team's linebacker, who runs for a touchdown.

It happened.

That was 1969, the year that defined bad Bears football. And you think this year is bad? Sure, a 1-7 start isn't fun.

How does 1-13 sound? Missed chip-shot field goals. Long last-minute touchdown passes against the defense. The 1969 Bears lost in so many silly, embarrassing ways. And one more thing:

"That '69 team would beat this year's Bears team," said Gale Sayers, the star running back that awful season. "Mainly because we had a running back on offense and a great linebacker in Dick Butkus on defense."

But come on.

"Yeah," said Bobby Douglass, the rookie quarterback in 1969. "I think we were probably a little better than this year's team. Maybe because of our defense."

Please. That 1969 team lined up against this year's team?

"We'd win it," said Doug Buffone, linebacker in '69. "I'm positive."

This is a challenge from history that can never be resolved, of course. But it says something when the weakest kid in class rolls up his sleeves and spouts off about how he can kick your tail.

"I gained over a thousand yards that sea-

**"That '69 team
would beat this
year's Bears team."
Gale Sayers**

son," Sayers said. "And even though we lost 13 games, teams knew when they played the Bears they were in for a fight."

"Monsters of the Midway. Today, that's gone. You don't even hear people say that anymore."

True enough, that 1969 team did have its stars. Sayers, coming off his first knee surgery, still led the league in rushing with 1,032 yards. Butkus was the best defensive player in the league. Buffone and defensive end Ed O'Bradovich were stars. Receiver Dick Gordon, too.

So what happened?

"People always tell me, 'You had Gale and you and this and that,'" Butkus said. "That's a real mind-twister. But, you know, we had some guys, but not enough. We were short at a couple of real key positions."

"I remember Buffone and I went to [defensive coordinator] Abe Gibrion once that year complaining: 'Me and Doug are in on every kickoff team. Every one of them. Exhibition season, regular season, everything.'

"He said, 'Look who else we've got. Would you play so-and-so?' I said, 'Well, then what the hell have we got them on the team for?'"

Buffone said that by the end of that meeting he and Butkus suggested that the Bears send the so-and-sos home and give their money to Butkus and him.

But the shortage of players, Douglass said, was by design. The bidding wars with the AFL were over, and Bears owner George Halas was able to resume his frugal ways, a Chicago sports tradition.

"We were just a team that wasn't going to spend a lot of money," Douglass said. "We had some superstars and also some pretty good athletes, myself included."

"There were eight or 10 guys they wanted to keep. The other guys were all dispensable."

In other words, talent wasn't what it took to make the team. Low pay was.

The 1969 team was coming off a respectable year, at 7-7. Second-year coach Jim Dooley had an exciting, young, scrambling left-handed quarterback in Douglass, who was the hope of the future. But some people weren't sure about Douglass.

And that sounds a lot like this year's team.

But you already know this year's Bears. So here's a primer about the 1969 Bears to help you determine whether they were better than this year's team.

The preseason started with a quarterback controversy between Jack Concannon and Virgil Carter. Douglass wasn't expected to play. No one in the city noticed that neither Concannon nor Carter had played well because Chicago's attention was on the Cubs' collapse.

But that's another story.

Concannon won the job and was promptly shut out in the opener, 17-0 at Green Bay. Chicago Sun-Times writer Jack Griffin at the

Bad news Bears

The 10 worst teams in Bears history:

Year	Pct.	W-L	Coach
1969	.071	1-13	Dooley
2000	.125	1-7	Jauron
1973	.214	3-11	Gibrion
1997	.250	4-12	Wannstedt
1998	.250	4-12	Wannstedt
1953	.273	3-8-1	Halas
1974	.286	4-10	Gibrion
1975	.286	4-10	Pardee
1945	.300	3-7	And/John.
1972	.307	4-9-1	Gibrion
1929	.308	4-9-2	Halas

time apparently already knew the season was not going to go as hoped. He ended his game story with this:

"Buckle the belts, fellows, it may be a long ride this season."

Game 2, a 20-17 loss at St. Louis ended when Mac Percival missed a 26-yard field-goal try on the game's final play. But talk afterward was of the strangest snap ever seen.

"We were in the huddle, and Jack Concannon called the play to me," Sayers said. "I didn't hear the snap count, but the ball was supposed to be snapped on the first sound."

"So [after the players were in position], I yelled at Jack to hold it. He stood up, turned around and tried to call timeout."

Continued on next page



Gale Sayers led the NFL in rushing in 1969 with 1,032 yards—even though the future Hall of Famer was briefly benched by Bears head coach Jim Dooley.

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'69 Bears

From previous page

Center Mike Pyle didn't know what Concannon was yelling, but only that he had heard a sound. So he snapped the ball.

To no one. It went straight up, maybe 15 feet high, Sayers said. And Cardinals linebacker Larry Stallings caught it and went 62 yards for a touchdown.

Game 3, and the Bears were about to win at the New York Giants. But with just under a minute left, Giants quarterback Fran Tarkenton threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to an uncovered receiver.

What happened? Butkus had called a zone defense, POW, but defensive end Bennie McRae thought the call was POC, for a blitz. Buffone, too, went the wrong way. But, it was reported at the time, that wasn't because he heard the wrong call.

He just wanted to hit Tarkenton.

"I can't remember," Buffone said recently. "I probably just chased anybody I could find."

Giants 28, Bears 24.

The Bears lost the next one to Minnesota 31-0, and Dooley decided to change quarterbacks, not to Carter but to Douglass. That angered Concannon and also Carter, who all but stopped talking to anyone.

And Game 5, Oct. 19, was an interesting day. The next day's Sun-Times had a headline of "Hull tells Hawks, 'I'm through.'" He was quitting over a disagreement with the team. Eventually, he did come back.

But that's another story.

The other headline, about the Bears' 13-7 loss to Detroit, started with this: Sayers benched.

Sayers benched? Yes, Dooley said he wanted a more powerful runner, so he benched one of the greatest backs of all time.

"It happened," Sayers said. "I think Jim Dooley at the time was trying to find an answer. There wasn't anyone immune to being benched. He may have thought I had lost a step during my recovery period."

"I turned out being the only one to gain 1,000 yards, but at least Dooley was trying to make something happen. You look at today, and coach [Dick] Jauron just wouldn't bench [quarterback] Cade McNown, no matter what. Why?"

After the game, Buffone remembers sitting in the locker room, depressed.

"And Abe Gibrion comes up to me and says, 'Doug, get your head up,'" Buffone said. "I said, 'We lost.' He said, 'Yeah, but we took out 10 Lions.'"

Two more losses, and things were getting ugly. The defense was blaming the offense.

Everyone was angry with everyone else.

"I changed my name twice during the year," Buffone said. "I remember one day after practice, the guys on defense stayed after and put together our own offense."

"Butkus was the center; I was the tight end. We started running plays, and one of the coaches came over and asked what was going on. We said, 'Hey, if we have to be on the field the whole time in games, we thought we'd like to try offense.'"

The Bears finally did win one, beating Pittsburgh 38-7. And this is where a little Bears lore can be rewritten. It has been said that the Bears couldn't win for winning.

By beating Pittsburgh, legend has it, the Bears finished tied with the Steelers for the worst record in the league. They lost the coin flip to Pittsburgh, giving the Steelers the first pick in the draft.

And the Steelers used it to take Terry Bradshaw. Had the Bears lost to Pittsburgh, the story goes, they would have gotten Bradshaw.

"Knowing our luck," Butkus said, "we wouldn't have gotten him."

No, they wouldn't. The Sun-Times reported at the time that the Bears planned to take Mike Phipps if they won the toss. And Douglass said the Bears didn't want Bradshaw or Phipps.

In the end, they traded their first-round pick to Green Bay for three aging veterans—linebacker Lee Roy Caffey, running back Elijah Pitts and center Bob Hyland.

Anyway, before Game 9 in Atlanta, which the Bears lost 48-31, running back Brian Piccolo, who had been coughing all year, sud-

"He looks up from his bed and says, 'Can't you [bleeping] guys do anything right?'"

Doug Buffone on Brian Piccolo's reaction after the Bears dedicated a game to the ailing running back -- and lost

denly couldn't breathe. He was diagnosed with cancer, which eventually killed him.

The Bears privately dedicated the next game to him, but lost 24-21 to Baltimore.

"After that game, we went to the hospital, and Brian was always joking around," Buffone said. "We walked in to give him the losing game ball and said, 'Pic, we fell short.'"

"He looks up from his bed and says, 'Can't you [bleeping] guys do anything right?'"

The Bears went on to lose the next three games, including 21-3 to Green Bay. And the final turn came here.

Dooley had let Carter start against Green Bay, but benched him at halftime. Carter said Dooley had promised him the whole game.

Sun-Times front-page headline: Angry Bear quarterback blasts coach Dooley ... 'a liar' ... 'no guts.'"

Actually, that was the clean version. So Carter was not allowed back for the final game, which the Bears lost 20-3 to Detroit.

And, finally, the disaster was over. For 31 years, anyway.



Despite the presence of all-time great Dick Butkus at middle linebacker, the 1969 Bears yielded 339 points, then the second most in franchise history.

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In Marcus they trust

BOB LeGERE

Wideout key to Bears' success



How important is Marcus Robinson to the Bears' success?

They've won just three times in their last 15 games, and in those three victories, Robinson has caught 19 passes for 459 yards and 6 touchdowns, 5 of them longer than 35 yards. If he were to maintain that pace over the course of a 16-game schedule, Robinson would finish the season with 101 catches, 2,448 yards and 32 touchdowns.

After a 1-7 start, the Bears need Robinson at his best in the second half of the season to prevent a disappointing year from turning into a total disaster.

"You go out there, you work hard, you expect to make some plays," Robinson said after returning from a one-game hiatus because of a sprained ankle that kept him out

of the Week 6 loss to the Saints. He caught seven passes for 88 yards in his first week back against the Vikings.

"Marcus always shows up and plays well," coach Dick Jauron said.

Other teams have noticed that, too, ever since Robinson was in the midst of last season's 84-catch, 1,400-yard breakout season. This year he's attracting more attention from opposing defenses, and not just because of his own extraordinary talents and big-play ability. Since the third week, Bobby Engram, the ideal complement to Robinson, has been lost to the Bears with a torn ACL in his right knee. Until someone else can step up and become the reliable, sure-hands target that Engram was, Robinson can expect a steady diet of double-teams.

"Sometimes I'll have a corner, a linebacker split out a little bit and a safety over the top," Robinson said. "That's a given. Once you start making big plays, teams are going to notice that, and they're going to start shifting to your side."

While Robinson knows the attention he gets from opponents is a sign of respect, he knows it's also a pain in the butt.

"You like it that guys are really paying attention, but then again you want to get the ball and be able to make plays," Robinson said.

"With those kinds of guys on you, you have to go to other guys. But I feel confident that if they are doing that, that means someone else is getting one-on-one. I think (Marty) Booker, Macey (Brooks) and Eddie (Kennison) can beat one-on-one coverage, so that gives them opportunities."

So far none of those three has shown the consistency that defined the past two seasons for Engram, when he was the team leader in receptions with 88 last season and 64 the year before.

"The thing about me and Bobby is that Bobby was here for a while, and he had been doing well," Robinson said. "Then I came on the scene with Bobby, so me and him were comfortable with one another. As far as those guys, they're doing pretty good now, but we're not throwing the ball like we did last year. When the big plays are happening (this season), I'm just the one on the end of those big plays, but I think those guys are capable of making those plays also."

But so far it hasn't happened. Robinson has four of the Bears' seven receiving touchdowns and all five of the team's pass plays of more than 40 yards.

If last year is any indication, though, Robinson might begin making even more big plays with Jim Miller taking over for the injured Cade McNown at quarterback. In just three starts last season, Miller connected with Robinson on six pass plays of 30 yards or longer.

Robinson's big-play capabilities are needed now more than ever. The Bears' offense had scored a total of just two touchdowns in the three games after the victory over the Packers



Photo by Steve Woltmann

Marcus Robinson has caught six TD passes in Chicago's last three wins.

and is desperate for a spark. Robinson is clearly their best chance.

"The guys are still enthused," Robinson said. "We know what we have; we watch film. We know the things that are going on inside, instead of the people who just watch TV and listen to the commentators. We're looking at film and we're judging ourselves."

"You've got to look at yourself and see what you could have done better, and guys are doing that, and guys are still hustling, so we still think we can (win the rest of our games). That's the attitude we're coming out with, everybody's working hard."

Bob LeGere covers the Bears for the Daily Herald.



"You like it that guys are really paying attention, but then again you want to get the ball and be able to make plays."

Marcus Robinson

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VIEWPOINT

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Bad news Bears

It seems this year is no different than any other. Expectations were high, but look where we're at now--at the bottom of the NFC Central. How long is it going to take until the Bears get a killer instinct? I love the Bears, but they seem to choke often.

Cade McNown seems rushed on all of his passes, throwing high or on the run. Plus I've never seen a quarterback take off on the run so many times. He could be considered the Bears' best running back!

The defense is terrible sometimes against the pass, but you can't blame them because they're on the field 45 minutes a game. I hope the Bears get it together and maybe win two games in a row.

Jeff Rasmussen
Logan, Utah

Bears sink to new depths

From top to bottom, from the front office to the coaches, our beloved Bears have officially become the equals to the Cincinnati Bengals. In fact, outside of their GM Mike Brown, the Bengals are

Fan Foto



Scott Kiefer is already a devoted Bears fan and knows how to signal "touchdown" and "first down." Scott's mother, Lisa, tells us that his grandfather was buried with Bears ticket stubs in his pocket and willed his season tickets to his children.

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS!

What's the primary reason the Bears have started the season so poorly? What two changes need to be made to salvage something? How many games will the Bears win?

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probably a little better.

One can't help but wonder if any of the McCaskeys have some input as to the extent the Bears have become unraveled. If so, changes ought to begin before this season is over, signaling to the fans that the hierarchy does at least care.

I believe everybody on the coaching staff with the exception of special teams coach Keith Armstrong needs to go. Dick Jauron, Gary Crowton and Greg Blache are not a good fit with the Bears.

I'll admit I was one that called for the dismissal of Mike Ditka and Dave Wannstedt. However, nothing compares to the depth the Bears have sunk to this season. I can't remember even the 1970s being this bad.

Gerald Piccolo
Houston, Texas

Cade should have played

I don't think any changes need to be done at this point in the season. I think the mistake that was made last year was we didn't start Cade McNown from day one. They tried the one series a game technique and it did give him experience, but they were rebuilding and still are. So why didn't they start him then? Maybe that would have

made McNown that much better this year.

At the beginning of the season I thought the Bears would be contending for the playoffs, but we still need a pass-rushing defensive end, a shut-down type cornerback, a running back and a run-stuffing, pass-rushing defensive tackle.

David Rodriguez
Tustin, California

Paying for past mistakes

I believe the reason the Bears have started so poorly this year is still due to mistakes made during the Dave Wannstedt era. Although talented, they are still a very young team.

Everybody is yelling to bench Cade McNown, but he needs the experience. Cade is the future of the Bears and needs that crucial playing time. I believe they are focusing on their long term plan, trying to get everyone playing experience now and build for the future.

Putting Brian Urlacher in the "mike" position was one of the smartest things they have done. He will be a force in the league for years to come. I am going out on a limb and saying that Brian Urlacher will be the defensive rookie of the year. However, they do need to work Barry Minter back into the starting lineup. He is a gamer.

I hate to say it, but the Bears need to waive Curtis Enis. Randy Moss would have been a better pick. It is great that James Allen is finally getting a chance to show what he can do.

Jason Prout
Dallas, Texas

Trivia Trove answer



Steve Walsh quarterbacked the Bears to their last playoff victory, a 35-18 win at Minnesota on Jan. 1, 1995.

(From page 15)



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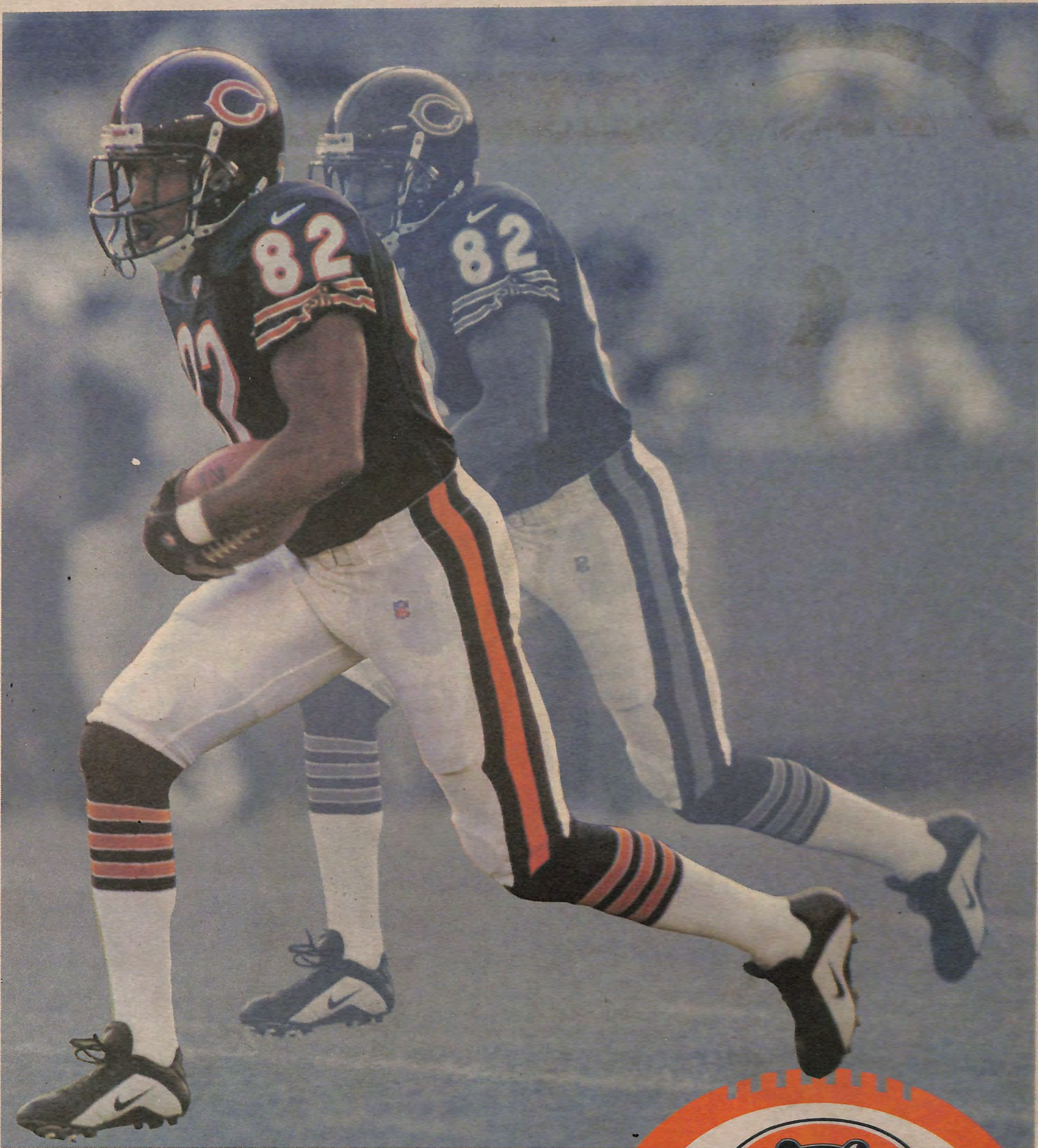
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